



DIRECTOR

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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Vice President

8 OCT 1976

Dear Nelson,

I am sorry that it has taken so long for me to respond to your letter of 20 September regarding Joe Persico's desire to have access to OSS records. As you can see from the attached staff paper, his request poses some problems that are a bit difficult. The most difficult aspect is that we have turned down a great many similar requests from other scholars. However, he will receive as promptly as possible the material he requested on the seven operations which are outstanding, as well as a large volume of material we are accumulating for his review.

I regret that we cannot be of more help and hope that both you and Joe understand the problems encountered. It is our expectation that the fruits of his labor will result in a positive and constructive volume.

Sincerely,

Curran

The Honorable Nelson A. Rockefeller
The Vice President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20501

Vice President

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POSITION PAPER - REQUEST FOR DIRECT ACCESS TO OSS RECORDS

The Agency now has a task force of retired annuitants reviewing classified OSS records for declassification so that they may be released to the public. OSS records in the possession of the National Archives and Records Service have already been reviewed and those in the possession of the Agency are now under review.

Unfortunately, the OSS records are not in good condition and they are poorly organized. In order to assemble the records requested by Mr. Persico, we must search various finding aids to locate the records requested, pull the documents together from many diverse records collections and then, prior to mailing them to Mr. Persico, review them for declassification and prepare copies. For these reasons and the fact that we have a limited number of trained analysts to process the work, we do not believe that allowing Mr. Persico direct access to the records would significantly expedite the process.

To date, we have provided Mr. Persico complete records for three OSS operations. Summaries of seven additional operations are now being forwarded to him. The remainder of the material for the seven operations is being assembled for review and release. In addition, we have assembled two feet of material for review in response to a number of questions raised by Mr. Persico. We will expedite this process as much as possible.

In addition to the question of the usefulness to Mr. Persico of having direct access to the records, we must also point out that granting him access would be in conflict with the position we have taken with numerous other scholars who have requested access to the OSS records. We have advised these other individuals that direct access is not feasible because of security requirements and the resources which would be required of us in terms of escorting, housing, analytical support and the like. To grant an exception in the case of Mr. Persico to this general approach could open us up to charges of preferential treatment.